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Having a ball

Two lumberjacks show their skills at the annual Dorset Snowball Festival over the weekend. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Left candidates largely aligned; PCs a no-show at meeting

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

The blustery storm that hit Haliburton County over the weekend resulted in a last-minute decision to host a Zoom meeting for the progressive candidates representing Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, and Brock townships on Feb. 16.

The meeting - presented by the grassroots Save the Minden ER group - was originally slated for the Minden Community Centre, but a declaration of significant weather put out by the township forced the meeting online. Despite the shuffle, the event was attended by over 50 interested viewers, who took the time to watch candidates.

Barbara Doyle for the NDP, Alison Bennie for the Liberals, and Tom Regina for the Green Party were present. It was noted that Conservative candidate Laurie Scott was invited to the discussion, but declined attendance.

Each candidate had two minutes to answer their questions, and were offered a one minute rebuttal following each answer. After

see CANDIDATES page 3

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Land Trust aims to clear the air

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

A recent Facebook post has put the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) on the map.

And perhaps not in a good way.

But the director and founding member of the nature conservation organization, Sheila Ziman, wants to set the record straight. "There is so much misinformation out there," she said, "and none of it is true. It's really sad."

The post went up last week by a private Facebook user, and brought forward a concern about the Highlands Corridor, which is 100,000 hectares of unceded Crown, municipal, and private land connecting three provincial parks across Haliburton County.

The land has been designated as significant by the HHLT due to its rich wetlands, forests, and species at risk that reside within the extensive property. "The Highlands Corridor offers a nature-based solution to building climate change resilience, protecting lands and waters, and maintaining biodiversity," says the Land Trust website.

The corridor has been in talks for years. "We've had open houses, we've been on the radio, we've been in the newspapers," said Ziman. "I'm not sure how this is the first time so many are hearing about the project."

But the concerns stemmed from one phrase the Facebook user shared: "This designation will not allow any of the following activities: hunting, fishing, trapping, logging, mining, quarrying, use of motorized vehicles, horse riding, camping, cycling, unrestrained pets, fires, removal of rocks, minerals, or animals, or drone use."

The post went on to say: "Are any of these things your family enjoys? Any of these things pay your bills? We all should be outraged!"

The post was shared nearly 1,000 times on Facebook, with hundreds of comments pouring in; the number increasing even as this paper goes to press. All local media agencies were tagged on the post, and able to see the conversation in detail.

On Feb. 10, the Land Trust issued a formal letter to the press. "HHLT is aware that mistaken information regarding our Highlands Corridor initiative is presently circulating across social media," it starts. "While we welcome public conversation regarding all of our work, it is essential that those conversations be based on accurate facts."

The letter went on to outline that trail use, as well as use by motorized vehicles, are allowed in the conservation area. Hunting, fishing, and trapping would also be allowed. "We recognize these heritage and outdoor activities are important in our community and for tourism, and they keep our economy vibrant," reads the letter. "We support their ongoing use on Crown land designated as a Conservation Reserve."

The only areas that would be minorly impacted would be logging, the development of new quarries, and mining on very specific, designated sections.

"We actually have a letter of support from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters," noted Ziman, "as well as a collaboration with Ontario Trails Protection Alliance (OTPA), who focuses on ATV use and motorized vehicles."

On Feb. 13, the OTPA issued a formal statement in regards to the ongoing misinformation, clarifying their collaborative approach with the Land Trust, and their optimism towards working together in a mutually beneficial way with one goal in mind: to protect and preserve the natural property they all share.

The letter opens with: "An alliance of four of Ontario's largest motorized recreational trail use organizations is now preparing to work collaboratively on plans that will protect access to trails within a proposed 100,000-hectare 'corridor' linking three provincial parks and a vast network of trail systems throughout the Haliburton/ Kawartha region." The full letter, which was sent to the press upon approval, can be seen on page 11 of this *Minden Times* for further context.

In terms of private property, Ziman noted that the Land Trust cannot and will not touch someone else's land. "Private property is private property, the only one who can touch that is the government," she said.

John Davidson of Wilberforce was the individual who sent the original letter to politicians, sounding the alarm bells. "I guess you could say I am kind of the instigator," he chuckled. Davidson was a senior lands and parks technician for the MNR during his working days. "I sent an email to Laurie Scott and other politicians, outlining my concerns," he said. "When I allowed the email to be posted on social media, it drew a lot of attention."

The primary concern on Davidson's part, is what he believes to be a lack of transparency from the Land Trust. He noted that while doing his research, he uncovered a proposal (known as the Milburn Kendrick proposal) which he said would tie up 8,900 hectares of public land.

"Some people, including HHLT members, say we have it wrong and need not be concerned. I suggest those people dive deep into those websites before forming an opinion," Davidson said, noting that they all want sustainability for the land.

"We don't want unnecessary overreach, that will adversely affect our local economy," he went on. "At a time when tariffs are a looming threat to all of our livelihoods, should we not expect complete transparency and public input before decisions of this nature are made? We don't feel that is too much to ask."

The Land Trust has been answering questions as they have been presented, both online, in-person, and via emails.

Ziman shared that the silver lining to the online backlash is that it's putting the Land Trust on the map, and people are talking about it. "We are responding to any reasonable questions that come through," she said. She did note it is taking some time, though, so she has asked for some patience as they wade through the conversations. Ziman has also noticed an uptick to their social media and website platforms, and has had a series of thought-provoking and thorough conversations with local stakeholders. Generally, they are able to work towards a place of understanding.

The Land Trust was summoned by County Council on Feb. 12, and were provided with an opportunity to clarify their intentions to staff and council members alike. While a select few audience members vocalized their thoughts, Ziman felt it was an important conversation to bring to the table. County councillors noted that they will take some time to receive information and feedback, as well as dialogue from provincial representatives once the heat of the ongoing election has cooled, and council members will reconnect with the Land Trust at the county's upcoming March 26 meeting.

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Snowmageddon 2025

Minden was hit hard with over a foot of snow over the weekend, with the first storm hitting Wednesday night, causing school closures for Thursday, and the second storm arriving Saturday afternoon and continuing all day Sunday. The storm put a damper on many Family Day plans across the county, while the Township of Minden Hills declared a significant weather event. /THOMAS SMITH staff

Candidates urge everyone to head to polls

from page 1

relaying the rules of the online forum, the moderator, Ken Trinka, kicked off the conversation, allowing each candidate to form their opening remarks.

Regina was selected to go first. “I feel very strongly that we need more Green in opposition,” he opened. “Green values are people values.”

Bennie, a new face for the Liberal Party, opened by saying that she had just recently stepped into the role just last week. “This is my first time doing anything like this,” she shared. The Brockville resident noted that while she may be new to the scene, she does have ties to the Haliburton Highlands, with her parents retiring to the Wilberforce area, before a lack of accessible rural healthcare drove them farther south.

Doyle shared that she is a lifelong resident of Lindsay, and has been involved with the NDP since 2018. “This election has never been more important,” she noted. “There’s a lot of opportunity for our riding to be better than it is.”

Due to the fact that the meeting was hosted by the Save the Minden ER group, it is no surprise that the questions kicked off with the candidates’ thoughts around healthcare. The three candidates were posed with answering which specific actions they may take to restore emergency services to the area, and to aid in the healthcare crisis that is sweeping the province.

Bennie noted that Liberal leader Bonnie Crombie “wants to address” the healthcare concerns, while Doyle dove in with a clear-cut plan. “The NDP and Marit Stiles tried to stop the closure,” she said in reference to the Minden ER, sharing that this is their “number one priority.” Doyle noted that it is not a solution that would happen overnight, due to changes in legislation and funding, but action-items would be put in place to re-open the Minden ER, including fair wages to healthcare workers.

Regina answered that healthcare should be publicly funded, and publicly driven, but noted that the future of the Minden ER is uncertain. “We can’t really say one hundred per cent that the ER is going to be re-opened,” he answered honestly. “The re-establishment of funding is needed.”

This was the only question throughout the duration of the candidates meeting that drew a rebuttal. Doyle of the NDP piped up once the opportunity was presented, and addressed Bennie of the Liberal Party. “Isn’t your leader on record saying we’ve been spending too much money on healthcare,” she asked.

To this, Bennie noted that she hadn’t heard that, but noted it may have been something Liberal leader Bonnie Crombie had said in the past. “I want to live in the present,” said Bennie. “And I totally agree with everyone who spoke on this healthcare issue. I have no beef.”

The candidates were then asked about governance and transparency, and how they intend to ensure transparency to the people. Doyle noted that there was a lack of transparency from the current Conservative government and their constituents, and directly referenced Laurie Scott’s absence at the meeting. “Having a government where you can access your leaders is very important,” she noted.

Regina agreed. “I can only address my own willingness to engage with the public,” he said.

Bennie shared that she was interested in offering regular newsletters to the constituents, and running town halls in an effort to get more engaged.

When it came to affordability and cost of housing, the three candidates were largely on the same page, all agreeing that it is one of the largest issues faced in our province. Regina noted that the Green Party intends to eliminate the land transfer tax for first time homebuyers, while Bennie took a focus on long term care, and reducing taxes for lower and middle income families. Doyle spoke on the importance of rent control, and offering stability for the unhoused in rural communities. She also noted that it would be beneficial to work directly with municipalities, to understand the needs of the individual rural communities within each riding.

The environment was at the forefront of many initiatives from all three parties, and when asked about rural sustainability and balancing growth with environmental impact, Doyle noted that step one would be to “clean up the damage that has already been done.” She also urged the importance of ensuring proper protections are taken at manufacturing levels. “We have to make sure more problems aren’t happening moving forward,” she said. “We have to understand that tourism is an incredible economic driver, and a smart investment.”

Bennie noted that she believes farmland and greenspace are the biggest assets of the riding, and is interested in extending the cycling paths around the region.

For the Green Party, Regina shared that they hope to reinstate powers to conservation authorities, and create a blue belt to protect waterways, and a food belt to protect farms.

For education, the three parties were once again aligned, focusing on ensuring rural schools are properly funded and staffed. Regina and Bennie noted that adding mental health services to OHIP would be beneficial to school systems, considering the challenges faced by school-aged children. “I’m going to totally agree with my colleagues,” said Doyle. “Schools have been chronically underfunded, and student transportation has been slashed.” She added that the NDP would offer a universal school food program, and $830 million a year to dedicate to school repairs.

> “This election has never been more important. There’s a lot of opportunity for our riding to be better than it is.”
>
> — BARBARA DOYLE, NDP CANDIDATE

Once the moderator went through the questions, the floor was opened up to respectful dialogue and questions from the viewers. While the topics of long term care and passport funding were broached, the elephant in the room was about the pending tariffs from US President Donald Trump.

Bennie simply noted that she did not know the answer. Regina shared that the Green Party would form a tariff task force to tackle the issue, while Doyle put forward an “Ontario-first” solution. “We need to look for income assistance for those who are hardest hit by this issue,” she said. “So we can ensure our families and our workers are protected with income support.”

With the absence of Conservative Party representative Laurie Scott, the three candidates of the major parties were largely aligned on nearly every issue put forward, with one viewer noting that this may split the left-leaning vote.

To understand the policies and individual beliefs of each party, it is highly recommended to visit their websites, or contact each candidate individually to seek clarification on potential concerns.

All three representatives encouraged everyone to go out and vote. “When we go to the polls, we need to think about what issues are top of mind,” closed Doyle. “You all need to get out and vote and be heard.”

Advance voting is available in Haliburton from Feb. 20 to 22, with election day landing on Feb. 27. For more information, visit www.elections.on.ca.

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2025 RECYCLING EVENTS

Household Hazardous Waste events at the Minden Arena (55 Parkside St) 8am-12pm on May 24, July 19, and September 20. Confidential Paper Shredding event at Scotch Line Landfill from 9am-1pm on June 28.

SNOW REMOVAL

Section 181 of the *Ontario Highway Traffic Act* states: No person shall deposit snow or ice on a roadway without permission in writing so to do from the Ministry or the road authority responsible for the maintenance of the road. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 181.

IMPORTANT TAX INFORMATION

The 2025 Interim tax bills were mailed on Friday, February 14th, 2025. If you have not received your bill(s) **prior to** the March due date, please contact our office.
The Interim tax bill will be payable in two installments: March 21st and May 23rd, 2025. This bill has been calculated using the 2024 annualized assessment multiplied by 50% of the 2024 applicable tax rate(s).
Payments received after February 6th may not be reflected on your tax bill. Please note that any overdue amounts shown on your tax bill do not include interest for March. Please contact our office for a current balance.
Property owners are responsible to provide the Municipal Office with written notification of any address change. As per the O*ntario Municipal Act, 2001*, failure to receive your tax bill does not exempt penalty charges from being applied to a tax account.

SAFE WINTER DRIVING

Leave extra space when driving and approach intersections slowly. Watch out for black ice - it can make the road look like shiny new asphalt. Pavement should look grey or white in the winter.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (7 Milne St, Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

- **February 27 – Regular Council Meeting**
- **March 13 – Regular Council Meeting**

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings in-person or via the live-stream link.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

A blocked exhaust vent can cause the Carbon-Monoxide emitted by fuel-burning appliances to build up, posing a safety hazard. When clearing snow around your property, give your exhaust vents a check.

NOTICE OF SCHEDULE CHANGE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that due to the cancellation of the February 13 Regular Council Meeting, Agenda items from the cancelled meeting will be moved to the Regular Council Meeting scheduled for February 27, 2025. Closed session items will proceed after the delegation section of the Agenda.

PA DAY ½ DAY CAMP AGES 6-12

Activities, games and crafts at the Arena on February 28th! Bring a refillable water bottle, a snack, and athletic attire. Drop-off between 8:30 and 9:00am Pick up between 12:00 and 12:30pm Registration must occur beforehand. Cost: $20.

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A very snowy Snowball

Mother Nature got the memo for the annual Snowball Festival in Dorset, and made sure there was an abundance of snow for the event. With a blizzardy backdrop, the two-day festival ran over Feb. 14 and Feb. 15 throughout the downtown core of Dorset, and drew eager attendees to the winter wonderland. /TIM YANO staff photographer

County council says why wait for a pay bump?

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

Haliburton County councillors gave themselves a pay raise back-dated to Jan. 1.

It was initially recommended by county staff that the salary raise would come into effect Jan. 1, 2026.

The warden will be paid $57,519.18, the deputy warden $25,200.81, and councillors $23,242.41.

Some of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus (EWOC) members represent larger centres. But the work is the same and much of the services Haliburton County provides are the same, said Gary Dyke, the county's CAO.

So that justifies boosting the rate of pay for local upper tier councillors, along with the warden and the deputy warden.

"I do think it is important that the compensation recognizes the work that's being done," Dyke said. "I think it's interesting to note (that) by going with the median salary of EWOC municipalities it puts County of Haliburton in the 50 percentile of the counties, which is the same standard council sets for our staff compensation."

Raising the compensation rates to that of the median rate of the EOWC municipalities will add $39,348.69 to the county operating budget.

There will be no changes to the per diem rate or the rate of compensation for mileage driven in a private vehicle on council business.

Councillor Murray Fearrey, the mayor of Dysart, said such changes are always done the year before an election. The round of municipal elections are slated for Oct. 26, 2026.

"I want people to know to have some planning," Fearrey said. "Come on, some of us are getting old here and we need to be replaced and we need young people to replace us."

He said council should start the remuneration changes immediately.

"I don't see why we need to wait for a year," he said. "If you're doing the job, you should get the money."

"You would suggest January 2025," said Warden Dave Burton, the mayor of Highlands East.

Coun. Bob Carter, Minden Hills' mayor, brought council's attention to a mathematical error in the proposed median compensation.

"We shouldn't be counting the existing Haliburton in there to calculate the median," he said.

"If you take Haliburton out of the list, then the median shifts," Dyke said. "We're part of the calculation."

Carter said the warden compensation should be $57,159.18 by way of the correct math.

Deputy Warden Liz Danielsen, the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, said she agrees with Fearrey's sentiments about raising the amount of compensation to possibly draw interest from younger people to get into the municipal and county political arenas. But a pay raise wasn't budgeted for this year.

"I have no doubt that we can probably find the money," she said.

At about $40,000, Dyke said the change would be minor to the county's operating budget.

"I would respectfully disagree that we start it any earlier than the beginning of next term," said Coun. Jennifer Dailloux, the deputy mayor of Algonquin Highlands. "I believe that our community is really experiencing hard financial times and I know that everyone at this table knows that too and respects that too."

It's incumbent as community leaders for councillors to refuse a pay raise when so many folks are hurting. It's different for the crowd that will come in at the start of the next term. And improving pay would be a good draw to many people.

"It's not an easy job," she said. "It's not a well understood job. There is a lot of hatred that comes our way and people need to be compensated for their pains."

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InOtherWords

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Vote

I'M NOT going to mince words this time.

You need to vote.

That's it. That's the whole editorial. If I didn't need to fill a 600-word slot on this page, I would leave it at that.

Because that's the whole point of this. We live in a democratic society, and while I recognize that the system is far from perfect, we really do have an opportunity to make a difference.

I was in town the other day, and happened to connect with a few of my friends, who braved the snowy sidewalks to run some errands.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Of course, because of the time period we are living in, the topic of the election came up. I think our generation is perhaps one of the last who were subtly told it was rude to discuss politics.

"Not a conversation for the dinner table," I heard, (not in my household growing up, but others, for sure).

So as I sat with two women around my age, we politely skirted over the topic of politics. And as time ticked on, we realized we had more and more to say.

Eventually, it came to the surface that we all had the same political beliefs.

But they had never voted.

"I'm not sure I know enough to vote," they said.

During the last provincial election in 2022, a new record was made: lowest voter turnout in history. Approximately 43 per cent of eligible Ontario voters showed up to the polls.

And I don't understand why.

I can appreciate that we are busy. I get it. I'm a mom. I work full time. Life happens.

But this is so, so important.

Of that 43 per cent, only 40 per cent voted for Ford.

And I won't get into the math here, but that's a clear indication that Ontario didn't want Ford in the top seat. But they didn't care enough to change it.

So why aren't we talking politics at the dinner table? I'd rather see people caring than acting completely ambivalent.

Because these votes are important. Who we vote for has the power to dictate our future, our livelihood. It can impact our jobs, our education, our healthcare, our taxes.

Whether you think you are political or not, something that Doug Ford has done in the past few years has impacted you in some capacity every single day.

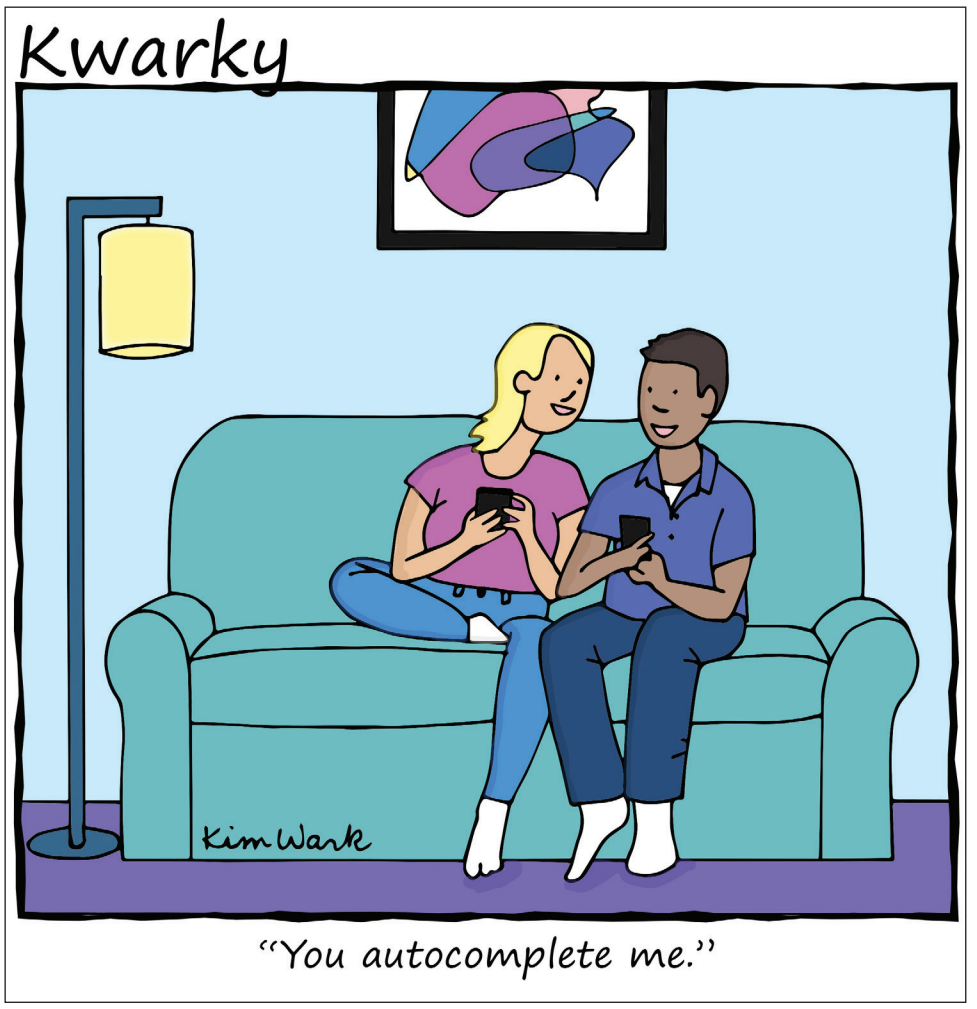
And I recognize that politics can seem convoluted. Sometimes I think they like to keep it that way; confusing to the masses so that things can get done behind the scenes. Sometimes I think that politicians depend on our ambivalence to further their own agendas.

Maybe, maybe.

But perhaps if more people talked about politics at the dinner table. If more people asked questions and sought answers and took some time out of their busy lives to speak their truths, then maybe we would see a difference.

So please, you need to vote.

And I am going to leave it at that.



When snowshoes fail

THE OTHER morning, I was planning an expedition to traverse across 15 metres of frigid Canadian wilderness to get to my shed, whose roof was in need of shoveling.

"Do we have a winter tent, sleeping bag, and three weeks worth of provisions?" I asked Jenn.

"Yes," she said.

"Fantastic," I replied. "Where is it?"

"In the shed," she answered.

Thus, it was with no hope at all, that I embarked upon a historic winter trek wearing only winter coat, gloves, toque and all the other clothing that keeps a fellow from being arrested.

All this is to say, I prepared as best I could. For instance, because there was a remote possibility that I might encounter wayward wolves or polar bears during my journey across that barren wasteland, I took the precaution of arming myself with a roof rake and extended handle.

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

Minute one of the expedition, however, proved that it was doomed to meet a tragic end. For that's when the harness of my right snowshoe gave up the ghost. This was entirely predictable since this was the first time I actually needed to use snowshoes in twenty winters.

This left me in dire straits. With the house a full eight metres distant and Jenn refusing to answer my phone calls or texts, I began assessing my options.

Should I carry on to the objective, which was one metre closer, where I could spend the remainder of the winter? Or should I turn back?

When Jenn finally answered one of my calls, she suggested the former.

Let me point out that several books have been written on how to utilize a pair of snowshoes – and I, like many others, have pretended to have read them all. But not one, as far as I can ascertain, has ever been written on how to traverse the wilderness on just one snowshoe.

With that in mind, allow me to share my experience.

First, let me say that, unless one leg is noticeably longer than the other, this is not a good option.

That's why I assessed my equipment, which comprised of one snowshoe and a roof rake. This naturally lead me to try pole vaulting my way to the shed. I only mention this in passing to explain to local pilots and drone operators why there was a pattern of three facedown snow angels on my lawn that day.

I finally settled on what I now call the stop, hop, and drop method.

This is a technique that requires the snowshoe enthusiast to stop long enough to place both feet on their sole functioning snowshoe. After doing this, a vigorous hop towards the destination, is effected. If proper form is used, this will lead to a face plant in the snow. I should note that, while similar, this differs from a snow angel, predominantly because it incites the kind of language that an angel would lose its wings over.

This mode of travel, though less than optimal, allowed me to arrive at my shed, just prior to sunset.

Once there, I decided to immediately rake the roof of the shed.

Suffice it to say, after much digging towards the light, I survived the ensuing avalanche. The good news is I will find both of my snowshoes by late spring.

As for the bad news? Well, I will find both of my snowshoes by late spring.

InOtherWords

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Books that helped me better understand technology

ERIN KERNOHAN-BERNING

Humans and Technology

WHEN MY grandfather died a few years ago, he was almost 95. At the time, it got me thinking about the rapid change in technology he would have seen over his lifetime. He was born in 1927, and the big new communication technology of the time would have been radio, though household use of radio wouldn't become widespread until the late 1930s. Then television would have taken off in the mid-1950s. Then finally, up here anyway, the internet in the late 1990s (earlier the closer you were to urban areas). That's three massive shifts in communication technology in a lifetime.

When I think of my lifetime, being born in 1981, radio and television were pretty much ubiquitous. Internet entered my life in my late teens, social media in my 20s, smartphones in my 30s, and now the large language models that power so-called AI have become a feature of my 40s. While the shift doesn't feel quite as massive as the progression of radio to television to internet that my grandparents would have experienced, each decade has come with a new technology that has altered our day-to-day lives.

Against this backdrop of constant change, we have a piece of technology that has changed very little – the book. The book has been around in some form or another for over 1000 years. As other technologies have threatened to usurp it, the book remains stubbornly relevant today. Stephen Fry once tweeted something along the lines of "Books are no more threatened by e-books than stairs by elevators." If you watch sci-fi movies and television shows, even amongst the most imaginative futuristic technology, a book inevitably shows up (thank you, Captain Picard).

When I write these columns, I do a great deal of research using online articles, podcasts, and videos to understand what I'm writing about. However, some of the deeper insights about technology I've found have been from books. Some of these books have been what I fondly call dead-tree editions, but audiobooks are a very useful and accessible format that I take advantage of. Briefly, here are some books that have helped shape my views and understanding of technology when it comes to it's impact on humans.

Ruined by Design by Mike Monteiro (2019) is a call to designers to abide by a professional code of ethics. Throughout the book, Monteiro argues that many injustices could have been avoided if the designers of the technologies that helped facilitate those injustices had taken an ethics-based approach. Even though the book speaks directly to designers, it's written in plain enough language that anyone interested can pick it up and learn about how technology is not neutral, how biases and prejudices are baked into our technology, and how many of the negative impacts of certain technologies aren't unfortunate accidents but the consequence of conscious design decisions.

Magazine by Jeff Jarvis (2023) is a history and commentary on the magazine. Jarvis takes the reader from the magazine's beginnings in the coffee houses of Europe, through its peak in the 20th century, and finally the cataclysmic effect of the internet that has all but destroyed it. *Magazine* helped me better understand the driving force that internet advertising has on how our technology is currently progressing. While the book may focus on the magazine, its lessons are applicable to social media, clickbait, and any technology that depends on ads.

Blood in the Machine by Brian Merchant (2023) details the first rebellion against "Big Tech", the Luddite uprising in 19th century England. Merchant shows us how similar the tech entrepreneurs of the industrial revolution were to the tech billionaires of today. Picking a few key figures to follow through the book (including Mary Shelley author of *Frankenstein*) he details how the Luddite uprising wasn't about an aversion to technology, but a fight against exploitation by technology.

How to be Perfect by Michael Schur (2022) isn't about technology. Rather, this book is essentially the research that Schur did for his television series *The Good Place*, a comedy series that tricked its audience into learning about moral philosophy – and liking it. When talking about ethics in technology, it's good to have at least a bit of an introduction to ethics in general. Written without self-importance but with plenty of tongue-in-cheek humour, Schur gives an easily digestible introduction to ethics that is easy to apply to our everyday lives.

If you're taking a break from the information firehose that is your screen these days but want to still engage in some deeper thinking that will help you navigate our current technology landscape, these are all books that will help you accomplish that goal. I know they have helped me sort through some of the wider implications of how technology impacts our lives.

Minden Memories

This photo will take out readers back to simpler times. Mossom Handley is at the reins, as he poses proudly with his buggy and handsome horse in his farm lane near Burnt River. The picture is believed to have been taken in 1935. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

Weapon complaint investigated at high school

On Feb. 14, at approximately 9:15 a.m. members of the Haliburton Highlands Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) responded to a weapon complaint at the Haliburton Highlands Secondary School in Haliburton.

Officers quickly attended the location and initiated an investigation. A lockdown order was issued by the high school. This is a step that is taken to ensure the safety of the school community while police work to resolve the situation.

Information was received that a youth was in possession of a weapon and had left the high school property. Officers were able to locate the youth a short distance away towards town, and they were taken into police custody. A knife was recovered by officers at the time of arrest. There were no injuries reported to police as a result of this incident.

As a result of the investigation, a 14-year-old of the Municipality of Dysart et al was charged with:

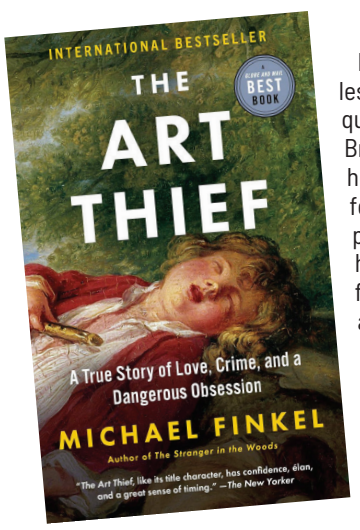
- Possession of a weapon for dangerous purpose
- Assault with a weapon
- Theft under $5000

The accused is scheduled to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Minden at a later date to answer to the charges. The identity of the person will be withheld under the provisions of the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA).

The Haliburton Highlands OPP is requesting anyone with information about this incident or any other unlawful activity to call 1-888-310-1122 or 705-286-1431. Should you wish to remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or submit a secure web-tip at www.khcrimestoppers.com, where you may be eligible to receive a cash reward.

Submitted

HCPL's Book of the Week


INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER
THE
ART
THIEF
BEST BOOK
A True Story of Love, Crime, and a Dangerous Obsession
MICHAEL FINKEL
Author of The Stranger in the Woods
"The Art Thief, like its title character, has confidence, élan, and a great sense of timing." —The New Yorker

For centuries, works of art have been stolen in countless ways from all over the world, but no one has been quite as successful at it as the master thief Stéphane Breitwieser. Carrying out more than two hundred heists over nearly eight years, Breitwieser never stole for money. Instead, he displayed all his treasures in a pair of secret rooms where he could admire them to his heart's content...until it all fell apart in spectacular fashion. This is a riveting story of art, crime, love, and an insatiable hunger to possess beauty at any cost.

The Art Thief by Michael Finkel is available to borrow as a book or book club set from the Haliburton County Public Library.

Political Profiles

Scott back on the ballot

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Despite rumblings that candidate Laurie Scott would not be running for the Conservative Party again, she has confirmed that her name is once again on the ballot. “I still have a lot of projects that I would like to get done for our constituents,” she said. “There are exciting opportunities happening across Haliburton County.”

Scott shared that her number one passion is healthcare, and with a background in nursing, she has no shortage of insight in regards to the ongoing challenges to the medical system. “I really do have this passion,” she said, “and that’s why I want to continue for another round.”

When asked about the closure of the Minden ER, Scott referenced the shortage of human resources. “(Closing the ER) wasn’t something that we wanted or expected,” she said. “But the hospital board does the day–to-day management, and now there is new leadership in place at HHHS.”

Scott shared that with the provincial government, there is a short, medium, and long term plan for improving healthcare needs. She noted that currently there is $85 million designated from the province for these initiatives. “We funded the application for the Kawartha North Family Health Team to open family care,” she said, in reference to the urgent care clinic in Minden. “They are funded for two nurse practitioners, but have only been able to fill one role.”

This ties to the human resources concern she alluded to earlier.

But Scott and the Conservatives are hopeful that by implementing additional resources, such as pharmacists increasing their scope of practice, then the weight will be taken off the ER. “I understand that it can all be very emotional,” she said. “But the hospitals have master plans in place, and we work with them to make sure they get funding.”

When asked about the timing of the snap election, called by Premier Doug Ford on Jan. 28, Scott cited the ongoing topics of tariffs and President Donald Trump. “Canada is not for sale,” she said. “This is all about leadership. Who do we want taking Trump on? The boss (referencing Ford) is a fighter.”

Scott shared that she does not intend to be present for any upcoming candidates meetings. “My job is winning this election,” she said, “so we’ve been meeting as many people as we can, face-to-face.” Scott has been going door to door, and connecting with people she meets when out and about. “The response has been very positive so far,” she said.

Laurie Scott is in the running for the coming election on Feb. 27. She says she stands behind Doug Ford, and thinks he is the best leader against President Donald Trump and his threats to Canada. /file

New Blue Party aims to pull further right

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

“We’re not splitting the right vote,” said Jacquie Baker, the Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, Brock representative for the New Blue Party. “We’re the only real Conservative Party.”

Formed in 2020 by Jim Karahalios, the New Blue Party aims to return to the original roots of conservative voters. “Our priority is to return accountability to our government,” said Baker.

Baker has recently moved to Haliburton County, and had been a long time Conservative voter. But she felt the current PCs were treading too close to the centrist line, and believes in the mandates aligned further right. “We had no home in the Conservative Party,” she said. “They had moved so far left, and away from our original priorities.”

She noted that the majority of their supporters are “disgruntled PC members,” and their movement is starting to grow; with the New Blues currently sitting as the fifth largest political party in Ontario. “The PCs are just Liberals in blue suits,” she said.

One of the main objectives for the New Blue party is to cut the carbon tax. The carbon levy was introduced in Ontario in 2019, and is designed to mitigate the harmful impacts of climate change across the province. The incentive is designed to encourage producers to switch from fossil fuel-based energy sources, to renewable alternatives in an effort to aid in environmental initiatives. There is also a tax-free Canada Carbon Rebate available to eligible individuals and families offset the cost of the federal pollution pricing.

“We want to axe the carbon tax,” said Baker. “By axing that, we hope to draw manufacturers back to the province.”

Baker noted that they also hope to cut the HST from 13, down to 10 per cent, with a long-term goal of removing the tax altogether across Ontario.

While the New Blue did not receive any seats in the last election, Baker believes they are just gaining momentum. “I’ll be shocked if we don’t win seats this time,” she said.

Jacquie Baker believes that the current Conservative policies are too centrist for her liking, and hopes to encourage right-leaning members to vote for the New Blue Party, instead. /submitted

Carter mindful of money for new council chambers

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Times Staff

Haliburton County is getting closer to moving to new digs.

The county has earmarked a budget of $1.6 million for renovations at the Land Registry Office (LRO) and the administration building workspace for council and county staff. That's $1.2 million from the department and $421,337 taken from reserve funds.

Council didn't make any decisions about the project when it met Feb. 12. It accepted a staff report for information purposes.

The building improvements will provide appropriate work and meeting space to best conduct county business. An improved public space will be able to host more members of the community, said Gary Dyke, the county's CAO.

"We are quite confident that we will be able to bring it all in with the budget-approved amount," Dyke said.

The buildings' overhaul is to provide accessible, safe, efficient, and functional spaces to meet all regulations and building and fire codes. County staff and a consultant are collaborating on the contractor and procurement documents.

It's hoped the request for tenders will be posted by March 28 to close April 22. The work could be awarded then by May 14 with construction to get underway later that month.

A substantial portion of the work is hoped to be done by the time September rolls around. The final inspection is slated for Oct. 10.

Work at the LRO building will include a new council chambers, washrooms, meeting room, kitchen and lobby area. The building will be updated to conform with building and fire codes.

Improved access and entrances, compliant washrooms, a lift to access top floor, and new AV system will enable the facility to better conform to accessibility standards. Plumbing and electrical upgrades will ensure compliance with current building codes. New HVAC systems and lighting retrofits will optimize energy efficiency.

At the administration building, renovations will include converting council chambers and top floor kitchen into office space, washrooms, basement kitchen, storage, and meeting rooms. Renovated spaces will conform with building and fire codes. Pretty much the same work as at the LRO to achieve the best energy efficiency and accessibility.

Councillor Jennifer Dailloux, the deputy mayor at Algonquin Highlands, said the interior visuals and the aesthetics of the council chamber is very important.

Such aspects as colour choice, furniture, window furnishings add much to a space. She said she can appreciate that those may be minor details given a big project that has been underway for a long time.

"How the council chamber looks is quite important to suggest how people are welcome in that space," she said. "How they're represented in that space. How it shows that we have pride in our community, how it shows that we have pride in our culture, in where we're going."

She asked about what kind of process is involved in decided how a space will look.

Sylvin Cloutier, the county's public works director, said staff has spoken with consultants about those project points and finishing touches.

"We're anticipating they will reflect the county colours that you see as you drive through the county," Cloutier said and added that art will be included to reflect the county's past and its present.

"We're trying to put as much of the local flair to the council chamber as possible," he said.

Deputy Warden Liz Danielsen, the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, suggested getting local visual artists to contribute paintings.

"I know that there might be insurance issues associated with that, but I'd like to investigate because I'm quite sure that local artists would love to display their work," Danielsen said. "It would be adding to the idea of community and participation."

Coun. Murray Fearrey, Dysart's mayor, said he's been hearing about the project for two years but this is the first time he's seen so much as a drawing about plans.

> How the council chamber looks is quite important to suggest how people are welcome in that space.
>
> — JENNIFER DAILLOUX, DEPUTY MAYOR, ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS

"It's more efficient to have the council chamber in the building where you have your staff," Fearrey said. "To me, this is a boondoggle."

He said he has so many questions that he can't support the project moving forward.

"I think we need to examine it carefully," he said.

Coun. Bob Carter, Minden Hills' mayor, said part of the reason the project was greenlighted was because funds for it wasn't affecting the 2025 capital budget. Money was coming from reserves and any money that needed to be borrowed would affect the 2026 budget.

"Now seeing it, I'm concerned about the cost," Carter said.

He said he doesn't want the county getting detailed pricing from vendors when it isn't known if the project is going to be approved.

"The concept of moving the council chambers to the land division building was always discussed," Dyke said. "That was the primary focus."

As for the amount of money to be spent, Dyke said that was talked about during the 2025 county operating and capital budget process. He conceded that aspects like aesthetics weren't discussed.

"Unless the project is going to be cancelled, we have to do this work to get to the point where (we'll know) this is actually what we're going to pay for the building," Dyke said.

Dailloux broached the topic of the four lower tier municipalities amalgamating into a single entity in the future. Would the layout of the new council space be sufficient for a possibly amalgamated council.

"The jury is still out," she said. "There is still a lot of people in favour. There are a lot of people against. That decision hasn't been reached. It may be reached in the next 10 years."

She sees nine chairs on the drawings, she said.

"In the hypothetical, yes," Dyke said about the facility being able to accommodate a higher number of councillors.

"I'm on the other side of the fence 100 per cent in regard to assuming there's going to be amalgamation," said Coun. Walt McKechnie, Dysart's deputy mayor. "I have a lot of friends in the Kawartha Lakes area and I can give you a lot of facts but I'm not going to bore you with them right now. Most of you don't want to listen to them. But it doesn't work."

"This is a repeat of the conversation we had at budget time where we did give direction to keep going on a two-building approach," Dailloux said. "I'm concerned that we are now pulling the rug out from under staff who are doing what we've asked them to do."

Danielsen said deferring a decision will end up costing the county more money.

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Huskies Hockey

The good old hockey game

The Huskies faced off against Lindsay on Feb. 17 in Minden, and came out on top with a 4-3 final score, despite a very tense last few minutes, with the visiting team nearly tying it up. The Huskies cancelled their Saturday game in light of the ongoing blizzard that rocked the county over the weekend. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Joint Statement Ontario Trails Protection Alliance (OTPA) and Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT)

Re: a collaborative approach to conservation and trail use on Crown land.

Haliburton: After meeting with key members of the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) early this week, an alliance of four of Ontario's largest motorized recreational trail use organizations is now preparing to work collaboratively on plans that will protect access to trails within a proposed 100,000-hectare "corridor" linking three provincial parks and a vast network of trail systems throughout the Haliburton/ Kawartha region.

Commenting on the outcome of the February 10 meeting, Joel Castonguay, President of the 6,000-member Ontario Federation of Trail Riders (OFTR) said, "We certainly had some initial concerns when we went into the meeting, but, after a really good exchange, it's clear we've got a tremendous opportunity to protect and grow our access to Ontario's trails and the great outdoors."

Todd Hall, Chair of the Haliburton Land Trust, agreed, noting there is a lot of common ground between the land trust and the trail-use communities.

"Our objectives of maintaining ecological integrity and protecting trail use both require the protection of our natural assets. We are committed to ensuring that these natural assets are protected and access to Crown land trails by ATVs, off road motorcycles and 4WD vehicles remains. HHLT's decision to support the designation of ecologically sensitive lands as Conservation Reserves was deliberate. The designation provides enhanced protection of the natural landscape and its critical functions while recognizing and respecting other uses such as trail use. These activities are part of our rural landscape, they help generate economic activity, and they are a part of our everyday lives. HHLT commits to working collaboratively with the Alliance and other stakeholders," he explained.

Kawartha ATV Association (KATVA) President Carolyn Richards also expressed optimism stating, that by working together with HHLT, the off-road community can build a sustainable model that can be used across the province to protect trail access as Crown land designations change and conservation efforts evolve.

KATVA and the Haliburton ATV Association (HATVA) are among two of the largest ATV clubs in Ontario and have stewarded trails within the Haliburton Corridor for over 20 years.

"HATVA and KATVA look forward to working in partnership with the HHLT in offering to the motorized and non-motorized public one of the best trail systems in Ontario while also protecting our natural environment," she added.

Peter Kendall, Executive Director of the Schad Foundation, was equally optimistic, noting that a partnership with the motorized trail-use community will bring a host of benefits. "The dedicated efforts of this community are responsible for many of the world class trails we have in Ontario. We look forward to working with the motorized trail use community and leveraging their wealth of knowledge, experience and expertise to advocate for greater protection and expansion of Ontario's trails".

Going into the February 10 meeting, Peter Wood, President of the Ontario Federation of 4 Wheel Drive Recreationalists (OF4WD) questioned the need for reclassification of the General Use area crown land to a Conservation Reserve but was greatly encouraged by the desire for the Lands Trust to work with the trails and outdoor recreation community on a plan to protect our access to these important public lands. "This is a great and ground- breaking opportunity to work together with the conservation community on what we hope will be a long-term, collaborative effort."

OF4WD, the OFTR, Kawartha ATV and Haliburton ATV Association (HATVA) are all part of the province-wide Ontario Trails Protection Alliance (OTPA). All of the OTPA organizations support multi-use trail systems and have a long history of land stewardship, safety education, investment in trail development and maintenance and codes of responsibility.

"It became apparent very quickly that the OTPA can -- and should be -- a prominent partner in our efforts," concluded Luke Ridgway, Manager of the Ontario Conservation Accelerator program that is driving investment into a variety of conservation projects. "The environmental conservation and trail user communities are ultimately interested in the same thing: the long-term sustainability of our activities on the land within the forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife which brought us there in the first place," he said.

Ontario's largest Conservation Organization, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) also attended Monday's meeting. "OFAH spokesperson Matt Robbins remarked that a collaborative approach to protecting and enhancing our natural resources is not only necessary but critical to ensure our respective interests are represented and that conservation efforts are broadly supported."

Following Monday's meeting, HHLT and OTPA have agreed to share further information, including detailed trail mapping, trail user information and more, with further meetings planned to discuss protection of trail access and to set up a permanent input/ advisory role for the motorized trail use communities.

Contacts for more information:

For HHLT: Todd Hall, HHLT Chair, chair@haliburtonlandtrust.ca, 705-457-3700

For OTPA: Lisa Thompson, OTPA Chair, Lisa.thompson@oftr.ca, 705-466-2747

-Submitted

PUBLIC NOTICE
ROGERS COMMUNICATIONS - PROPOSED 70 METRE SELF SUPPORT WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS INSTALLATION C8590

DESCRIPTION:

- The Self Support structure will sit within a chain-link fenced compound. The compound will contain a walk-in equipment cabinet housing radio equipment, tools, manuals and first aid kit.
- The site will provide fast and reliable wireless voice and data services in the Township of Minden Hills in the area of Mountain Lake, eliminating the need for additional infrastructure in the area.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION:

With respect to this matter, the public is invited to provide written comments or request additional information by **March 3rd, 2025,** to the contact shown below. Please include a return address.

Spectra Point Inc. - Agent for Rogers
Saja Elshaikh
302 – 1090 Don Mills Road
Toronto, ON M3C 3R6
Phone: (647) 447-8548
Email: saja@spectrapoint.ca

LOCATION: Site located in a forested lot 1400 metres north and 370 metres east of the intersection of Bobcaygeon Road and Scotch Line Road.

ADDRESS: PART LOT 14-15 CONCESSION A MINDEN

AVIS PUBLIC
ROGERS COMMUNICATIONS - PROJET D'INSTALLATION DE TÉLÉCOMMUNICATIONS SANS FIL AUTOPORTANTE DE 70 MÈTRES C8590

DESCRIPTION :

- La structure de la tour sera située dans une enceinte clôturée par un grillage. L'enceinte contiendra une armoire de rangement pour le matériel radio, les outils, les manuels et la trousse de premier soins.
- Le site fournira des services voix et données sans fil rapides et fiables dans le canton de Minden Hills, dans la région de Mountain Lake, éliminant ainsi le besoin d'infrastructures supplémentaires dans la région.

LA CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE :

En ce qui concerne cette question, le public est invité à fournir des commentaires écrits ou à demander des informations supplémentaires avant le 3 Mars 2025, au contact indiqué ci-dessous. Veuillez inclure une adresse de retour.

Spectra Point Inc - Agent pour Rogers
Saja Elshaikh
302 – 1090 Don Mills Road
Toronto, ON M3C 3R6
Phone: (647) 447-8548
Email: saja@spectrapoint.ca

EMPLACEMENT : Site situé dans un lot boisé à 1400 mètres au nord et 370 mètres à l'est de l'intersection du chemin Bobcaygeon et du chemin Scotch Line.

ADRESSE : PART LOT 14-15 CONCESSION A MINDEN

HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS HEALTH SERVICES

Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) delivers high-quality health services to residents, cottagers, and visitors to Haliburton County and the surrounding area. We work closely with local and regional partners to optimize health and wellbeing in Haliburton County by providing access to essential health services, including Primary Care, Hospital (Acute Inpatient and Emergency Care), Long-Term Care, End-of-Life Care, Mental Health & Addictions Services, and Community Support Services. For more information about our organization please visit our website at www.hhhs.ca.

HHHS is seeking strategic, experienced, engaged, and talented members of our community to join us in pursuit of this vision by participating as a voluntary member as a Board Community Member on one of the Board's Standing Committees.
At a minimum, Board Community Member should expect to devote approximately 4-6 hours of time per month, including attendance at committee meetings (about 9 per year) held in-person and/or virtually.

Annual Board Community Member recruitment is based on vacancies and the requirements identified through a Board Skills Matrix that ensures a complementary balance of knowledge, skills and experience. **This year we are seeking individuals with clinical background, legal, and patient and healthcare advocacy backgrounds**.

At HHHS, we recognize and respect the contributions that a diverse team can make to our healthcare system. We welcome candidates of diverse backgrounds, abilities, and identities to apply. If you require assistance or accommodations in the process, please contact Michel Henry for prompt support.

How to be Considered
Interested applicants are requested to complete an application form and submit it along with a covering letter and resume via email quoting "HHHS Board Community Member Recruitment" in the subject line to mhenry@hhhs.ca by **March 1, 2025**. All applications will be acknowledged and held in confidence.

Application forms and additional board information can be found at:
www.hhhs.ca/about/board

Inquiries can be directed to:
Email: mhenry@hhhs.ca
Phone: (705) 457-2527

Walk the Line: line dancing comes to county

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

Have you ever heard of line dancing? Despite the country-roots of the Haliburton Highlands, the traditional western dancing style isn't something that's frequently seen in the area.

But Karley Stevenson wants to change that. "I'm from Alberta," she said, "and it was very popular there, so I'd like to bring it here as well."

Stevenson noted that when she first made the move from Alberta to Ontario in 2014, many people had never heard of line dancing. And while it wasn't particularly popular in the area, she missed doing it, and thought that others may be interested in participating as well - particularly folks in her age-range.

"Being someone in my mid-30s, finding something available on the evenings or weekends is so hard," she said. "So I thought about offering something for my generation."

She noted that there are line-dancing classes that are offered through the day, but are targeted to a retired bunch, as they occur during working hours. Stevenson hopes to offer classes and sessions for people of all ages, but especially accessible to young professionals who work throughout the day.

The concept of line dancing is generally designed for a group of people, all in singular lines and participating in choreographed steps. You don't need a partner to participate, which can make the style of dance fun for anyone interested in participating.

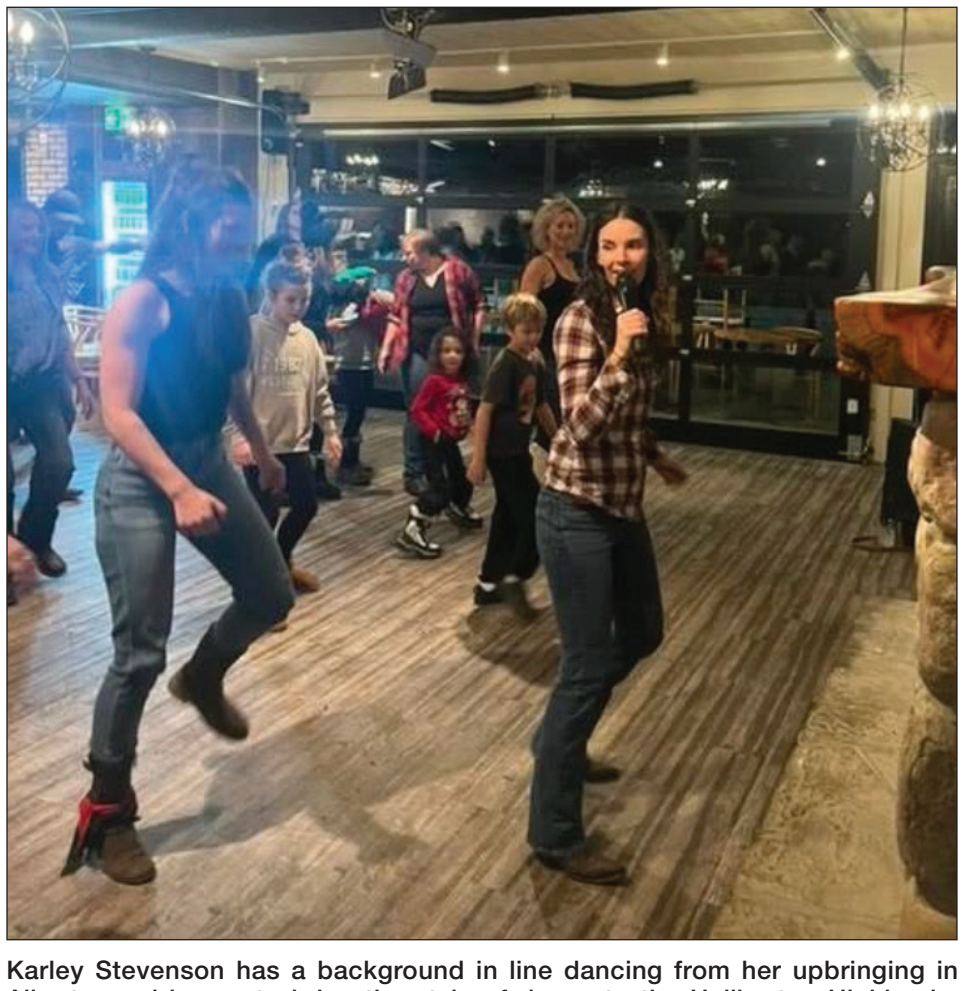
And while the choreographer walks the dancers through the steps, Stevenson said that there is a level of athleticism required to keep up. "Plan to get hot," she laughed. "It's a workout for sure."

On top of simply being a fun chance to get out and meet some new people, there are also an array of health benefits to the dance, including improved coordination and balance, increased memory and cardiovascular health, and has been seen as incredibly beneficial to aid in depression, dementia, and Alzheimer's.

Often the music seen accompanying traditional line dancing is country or western, but Stevenson said she has participated in dances with all different genres of music, so the sky's the limit.

Stevenson hopes to get her classes up and running soon. "Everything is in the works, now," she said. "I am working behind the scenes." She's currently focusing on pop-up classes and events to start increasing awareness of the dance around the community. This includes offerings at local restaurants, bars, or even special private events such as bachelorette parties. She has a series of pop-ups hosted at the West Guilford Community Centre, and has started a newsletter for folks interested in keeping up with her lessons.

For more information on line dancing, or to get in touch with Stevenson directly, visit her Instagram page @always.in.boots or email karley.e.stevenson@gmail.com.



Karley Stevenson has a background in line dancing from her upbringing in Alberta, and hopes to bring the style of dance to the Haliburton Highlands. /photo submitted

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	1		8	2		7		9
			1		7		4	
4	2		9	6		8		3
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	3			5		9		
7		5					8	6
		1			2			7
3	4					1	9	
6			3			4		2

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Answers on page 17

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Submitted

Rhea Ziorjen skates at the S.G. Nesbitt Arena in Minden. /FILE

S.G. Nesbitt Arena switches to skating by donation

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Times Staff

The S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena is now offering both Adult and Parent and Tot public skating with admission by donation.

"This is an exciting new initiative for us at the Arena," said Candace McGuigan, director of community services. "In the past, we have had skates sponsored by local businesses, charities, as well as members of the public providing free admission throughout the year."

Skating admission by donation was brought forward to council on Jan. 9 this year during the review of the Finance Report on Proposed Changes to the Fees and Charges By-law. The council agreed to the changes, following the model used by the Cultural Centre.

"It is an opportunity to keep active especially during the winter months. Also, you are out socializing interacting with fellow skaters – being active and engaged is a great thing for everyone," said McGuigan. "Specifically, recreation ice skating provides benefits to cardiovascular health, muscle strength, coordination, balance, and mental health."

During the public skate, skaters must be mindful of the flow of skaters and travel in the same direction as all skaters. No figure eight maneuver, skating backwards, or horseplay is allowed. The free public skate is not for playing games and there will be no balls, pucks, chairs or sticks provided.

Skate aids are provided for both youth and adults.

The public skating ice schedule from Jan. 9 to March 29 is as follows:

Sundays from 2:30 p.m. to 4:20 p.m.

Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 9:50 a.m. (adult skate), 12 p.m. to 12:50 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 4:50 p.m.

Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. (adult skate), and 4 p.m. to 4:50 p.m.

The schedule will be adjusted for March Break. To see changes, please visit the Township of Minden Hills calendar on their website. Physical schedules can be found at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena, located at 55 Parkside Street, in Minden.

Clear Snow and Debris from 911 Numbers/Civic Addresses

Now that the snow is here and the numerous times plows have pushed snow back to permit access, the (911 numbers) blue placards are becoming hidden from view. Please remember to clear the snow and debris away from 911 numbers.

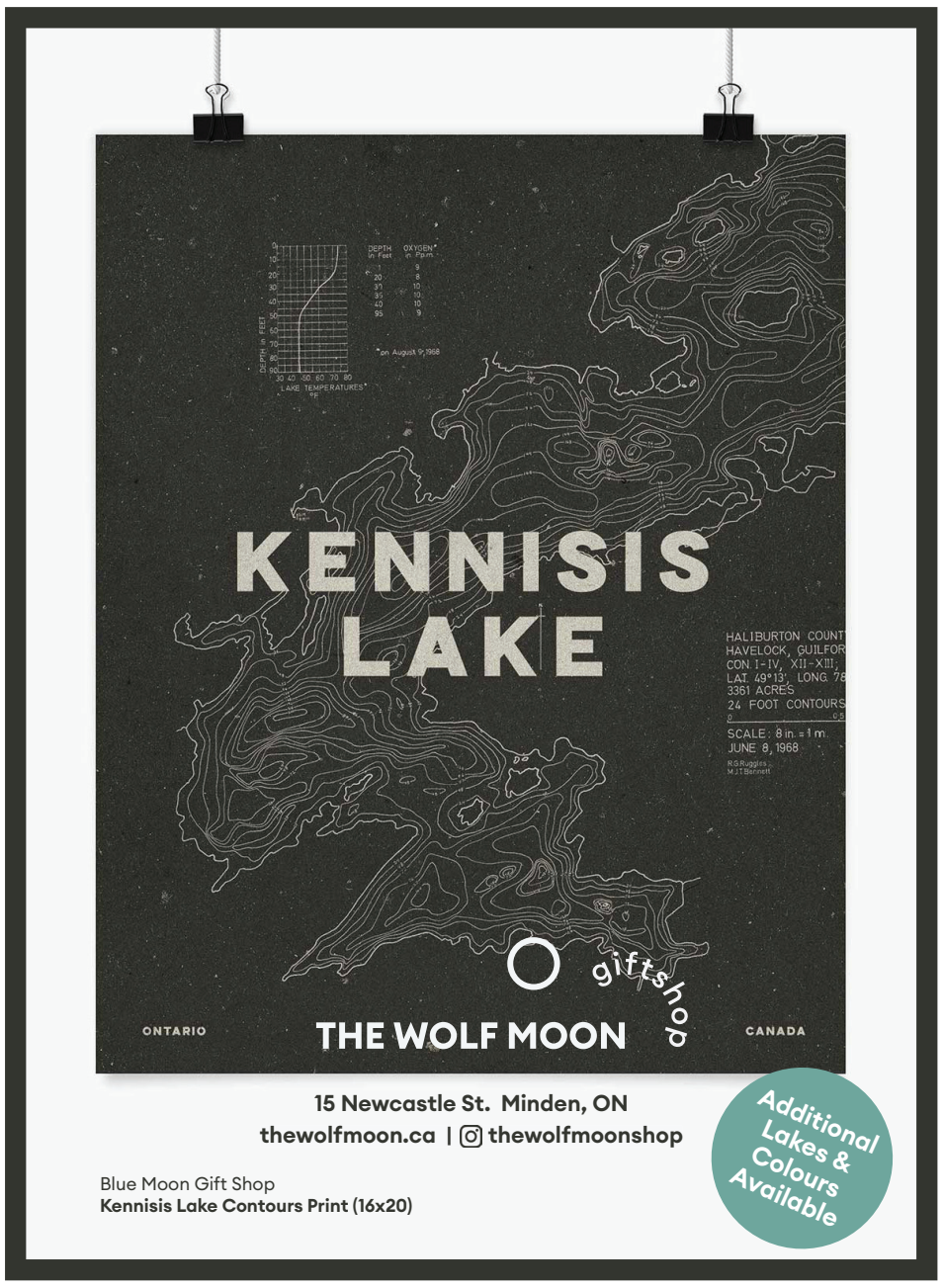
It is extremely important that emergency services are able to locate an address as soon as possible when dispatched to emergency situations.

Thank you for your cooperation because we all know every second counts when a life depends on it!

Submitted

With the race stopped, drivers got out to push another driver out of the snowbank on Saturday, Feb. 15. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

The hood of an ice racing car buckled after a collision.



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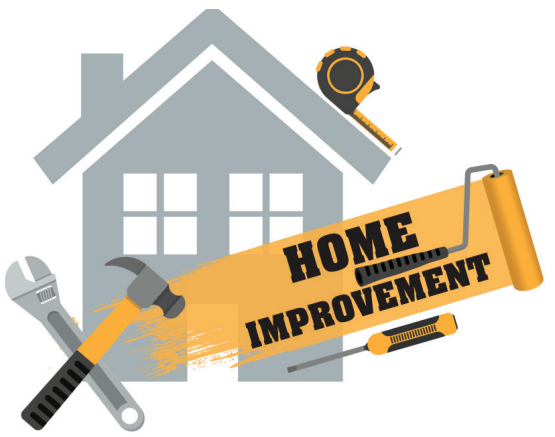

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The successful candidate will hold a college diploma in Business or Payroll Administration or other related field and possess 3 years of related municipal experience. The hourly wage range for this non-union position is $35.09 - $41.05. This position includes participation in the OMERS defined benefit pension program and employer paid extended health benefits.

Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for a more detailed posting and job description.

Please forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than February 26, 2025, at 4:30pm.

We thank all who apply for this position; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted. The interview evaluation process will include a practical skills component.

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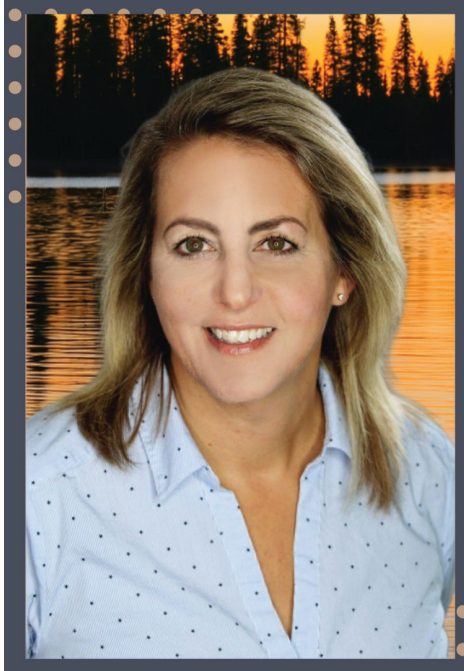

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When: Mar 7 - Sports and Dodgeball 6:30 to 9 p.m., Apr 4 - Sports and 9 Square 6:30 to 9 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Highlands Secondary School
For Grades 6 to 12. For more info contact haliburton@youthunlimitedkaw.com.

Minden Ice Races Schedule 2025

When: Feb. 22-23, and Mar. 1-2
Where: Minden Fairgrounds
Spectator admission is free. Races begin at 9 a.m. on Saturdays and 11 a.m. on Sundays.
Adrenaline-packed racing on a frozen track!

Growing Food from Seed

When: March 4, 1 p.m.
Where: Minden Community Center, 55 Parkside St. Minden
Do you love gardening? Join the Minden and District Horticultural Society at the Minden Community Center. Guest speaker Diana Westland will be discussing 'Growing Food from Seed ', followed by the monthly society meeting. New members welcome!

Recurring events

Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library New Book Nook Hours

When: 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Where: Minden Hills Branch, 176 Bobcaygeon Rd. Minden
Choose from a variety of gently read books: thrillers, mysteries, romance, biographies, children and youth selections, Canadian authors, fiction, science fiction/fantasy, sports, spiritual and other non-fiction books. Bring a reusable bag. Payment is by cash donation. All money raised by the Friends of the Haliburton County Public Library supports library enhancements and programmes for all libraries in the county.

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Focus narrowed on county options

by Andrew Milne

Councillors and administrators of governments across the county met last week to discuss plans for local government restructuring.

The February 14 meeting was held to narrow down a list of options for county restructuring.

Delegates to the meeting reduced a list of possibilities to primarily two options — the amalgamation of a number of the lower tier governments (townships and amalgamated townships), and the wholesale elimination of the lower-tier governments, leaving only a county government.

Delegates also expressed a wish that the possibilities be explored for amalgamation and sharing of services with neighbouring jurisdictions. And they emphasized concern that any initiatives to restructure be assessed critically against the option of leaving the structure of government as is and seeking cost-saving measures elsewhere, such as through the sharing of services.

Local government restructuring is largely driven by recent cuts to transfer payments from the province of Ontario. The cuts are expected to make some jurisdictions — especially the smaller ones — unviable, and to result in financial stress throughout local government.

The province announced November 29 that core transfer payments to the municipalities would be reduced by 47 percent. The provincial government says the cuts, as an average figure, represent around two percent of current municipal spending.

Locally, the cuts vary from just under two percent of expenditures upwards to six percent.

A second set of cuts, of similar magnitude, are anticipated in the next fiscal year.

Not all present at the meeting were entirely comfortable with the process.

Rick Forget, a Monmouth councillor, expressed concern that the process was moving too quickly, and that the councillors present had not been adequately prepared to make such far-reaching decisions. Nor, he said, did the structured, scripted meeting format give them much time to think about it.

Said Forget, "We're given 20 minutes to discuss this, we're to make the decision, and then okay, we move along. I feel that this whole process is just going too fast."

Ann Barker of Stanhope expressed similar concerns. "It was my impression," she said, "that we were coming here to be brought up to speed on what you were doing — not to go over all of this."

Ross Rabjohn, Sherborne et al reeve and former county warden, responded that the process is still really only in its

(more on page 5)

The spirit of love was in the air Wednesday at Archie Stouffer Elementary School as the staff and students marked Valentine's Day. Teaching assistant Sue Payne, inset, was a hit as the Queen of Hearts. Students Cheryl Ripley, left and Brock Thomas,model their heart-felt costumes for the Valentine's Day Ball.

Student's survey examines health services restructuring

Residents of Haliburton County and area are being asked to participate in a survey about the restructuring of health services.

The investigation into the changes is being undertaken by second year medical student Shane Burch. The former Haliburton County resident is studying medicine at University of Toronto. One of his courses is entitled Health and Illness in the Community.

"In addition to our classroom study, we are required to get out into the community to examine health and wellness," Burch explained. A portion of the course is designed to provide the medical students with an understanding of the determinants of health in the community.

Burch has an interest in rural and emergency medicine and so the restructuring currently underway in Haliburton County provided a model for him to study. The survey is designed to provide him with an understanding of the community's perceptions of the services available through the local hospitals and how they might change if the services are reduced or closed.

"Participants in the survey should be aware that there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers to the questions," Burch stated. "My purpose is to determine people's perceptions of the current situation and how they feel about the future."

The Times and the *Haliburton County Echo* have agreed to participate in the survey by printing the questionnaire. In return, Burch will report back to our readers on his findings. A copy of the survey can be found on pages 17 and 18 of this week's newspaper. Please complete the survey, tear the page out of the paper and bring it to *The Times* office, 134 Main Street , Minden or mail it to Box 97, Minden, Ontario K0M 1S0. Surveys will also be accepted at the *Haliburton County Echo* office on York Street in Haliburton.

Way seems clear for board to take over Hyland Crest

by Andrew Milne

Concerns at county council level over the takeover, by the health board, of Hyland Crest long term care facility, are probably unfounded, according to the board's lawyers.

The Haliburton Highlands Health Board is expected to take over operation of the facility sometime within the next year or two.

Hyland Crest is currently administered by the county.

It recently came to light that it was one of the conditions in the formation of the county government that the county maintain a 'home for the aged' such as Hyland Crest.

County councillors expressed the concern that, should the home no longer be administered by the county, the county would, according to the legislation, stand to lose its charter.

The legal opinion the board got, however, was that although the legislation itself would be difficult and time consuming to change, there should be legal arrangements that could be made that would get around the problem.

Said executive director Foster Loucks, "It seems to me that if we let the lawyers at it, they should be able to work something out."

Former county warden Ross

(more on page 2)

Community card for Tim Heming

Everyone is invited to send best wishes to Tim Heming the former resident of Minden who has been named an Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year. The young man will be undergoing serious surgery next week and so neighbour Sheri Hawkins has suggested the community send our best wishes to him. See page 7 for details.

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